

quality of life in her community and for her social activism. Thank you Ms. Barbaro.

# TRIBUTE TO CURT FLOOD

HON. WILLIAM (BILL) CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 1997

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to recognize and pay tribute to my friend and hero, former St. Louis Cardinals outfielder Curt Flood, who died on January 20, 1997.

In addition to this status as professional baseball player, Curt will be remembered as the man responsible for bringing collective bargaining to professional baseball. He took his case of free-agency all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. In his renowned letter to former baseball commissioner Bowie Kuhn, Curt Flood eloquently articulated his well-founded reasons and encouraged future professional players to fight diligently for their rights.

Curt Flood was a great humanitarian. He devoted his time and resources to numerous philanthropic causes. On my desk in my congressional office, there sits an award, an old bronzed shoe, from Aunts and Uncles, and organization which Curt Flood helped fund to provide shoes to needy children in the St. Louis area. Each time I look at that shoe, I am reminded of what a great man Curt Flood was.

I remember as if it were yesterday instead of 1961 that Curt, my cousin Arthur, and I spent several days and nights painting caricatures on the walls and ceiling of my Glow Worm cocktail lounge.

There are times when we forget the wonderful contributions that professional athletes make to mankind. The spotlight can be so blinding that we only remember their home runs, three-pointers, or touchdowns. Very seldom do we remember them for the work they do outside of their profession. That is why I submit to our colleagues Curt Flood's story as reported in the January 23, 1997, St. Louis American newspaper and a copy of his letter to Commissioner Bowie Kuhn regarding his free agency status.

[From the St. Louis American, Jan. 23, 1997]

CHAMPION OF PRINCIPLE—FORMER CARDINAL  
CURT FLOOD DEAD AT 59

(By Alvin A. Reid)

LOS ANGELES—Curt Flood used his athletic talent to help make the St. Louis Cardinals two-time world champions and then used his conviction to change major league baseball.

Flood died of throat cancer on Monday in Los Angeles, two days after his 59th birthday.

His dramatic stand against baseball's reserve clause ended his tenure in St. Louis in 1970. However, before he moved to Spain to further his budding artistic career, he had a profound impact on the St. Louis community.

"Curt Flood and former St. Louis football Cardinal lineman Ernie McMillan helped fund the Aunts & Uncles organization and their mission was to see to it that all kids in the city had good shoes," said Bennie Rodgers, *American* executive editor. "They would have the shoe give-a-way at Christmas and Easter and give thousands of kids shoes, they would pay for it."

Rodgers said the shoe give-a-way became a weekly event and was headquartered at the

current location of the *American* offices at 4144 Lindell Blvd.

When traded to the Philadelphia Phillies, Flood refused to go. He petitioned to Commissioner Bowie Kuhn that the current system was akin to slavery and that it violated antitrust laws. The commissioner refused Flood's request for free agency. He sat out of baseball in 1970 while legally battling the ruling. He returned to baseball in 1971 as a member of the Washington Senators, but lasted just 13 games. After one game he found a black funeral wreath at his locker.

The commissioner refused Flood's case, which eventually reached the U.S. Supreme Court in 1972 where he lost his lawsuit. However, in 1975 an arbitrator granted free agency to two players, and permanently diluted the reserve clause and led to creation of the free-agent system still used today.

[From the St. Louis American, Jan. 23, 1997]

CURT FLOOD'S FAMOUS LETTER, A SIGNATURE  
DOCUMENT

(By Barry Cooper)

On the day that Martin Luther King was being honored, yet another famous African-American passed on. Curt Flood, who pioneered free agency by challenging baseball's long-standing reserve clause in the early 1970's, died in Los Angeles Jan. 20 after a battle with throat cancer. He was 59.

Here's the famous letter Flood wrote to then baseball commissioner Bowie Kuhn. That letter—and his subsequent lawsuit—forced baseball to adopt what has now become free agency.

December 24, 1969

Mr. Bowie K. Kuhn, Commissioner of Baseball, 680 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019.

After twelve years in the Major Leagues, I do not feel I am a piece of property to be bought and sold irrespective of my wishes. I believe that any system which produces that result violates my basic rights as a citizen and is inconsistent with the laws of the United States and of the sovereign States.

It is my desire to play baseball in 1970, and I am capable of playing. I have received a contract offer from the Philadelphia Club, but I believe I have the right to consider offers from other clubs before making any decisions. I, therefore, request that you make known to all Major League Clubs my feelings in this matter, and advise them of my availability for the 1970 season.

Sincerely Yours, Curt Flood.

Flood sat out the 1970 season and took the case to court. A deal was worked out in 1971 that sent him to the Washington Senators, but he played only 33 games and retired. Later, other players were able to take advantage of the free agency that he had fought so hard for.

## REFLECTIONS ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 31—THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

SPEECH OF

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, it's a day of biblical proportions—Congress debates the Ten Commandments and Charlton Heston prepares to present the staff he used as Moses to Mickey Mouse. The theater of the absurd becomes reality on the Hill and off.

I walk through the valley of congressional hypocrisy and take spiritual inventory of the

less than holy works of my colleagues on welfare. Without trying to upstage Moses, I offer the following principles for consideration:

Treasure the children. Thou shalt not prioritize money above them.

Thou shalt not take the status of legal immigrants in vain.

Thou shalt not willfully push over 1 million children into poverty.

Thou shalt not deny disability payments to over 260,000 of the poorest children of our nation.

Thou shalt not bear false witness to over 800,000 elderly legal immigrants by terminating Medicaid and SSI assistance.

Thou shalt not deceive our nation's governors, forced to bear the burden of a disintegrated safety net and an evaporated entitlement, with the false prophecies of bonus payments and block grants.

Thou shalt not disgrace a nation in a time of widening gaps of wealth under the guise of reform.

If Members look to the Bible for justification of their actions, they would profit from the book of Job:

Do you limit wisdom to yourself? What do you know that we do not know? What insights do you have that we do not have? The gray-haired and the aged are on our side, men even older than your father. Why has your heart carried you away, and why do your eyes flash, so that you vent your rage against the meek, the humble, the poor of our nation? Job 15:8-13.

## ALABAMA AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 1997

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, religious freedom is once again under attack in our country. In my neighboring State of Alabama, the recent controversy over the Ten Commandments highlights the contempt that some people in our country have for religious freedom.

Alabama Circuit Court Judge Ray Moore opens each session of his courtroom with a prayer. The Ten Commandments hang on the walls of his court. Once again, the ACLU is saying that it is a terrible thing for the basis of our laws to be displayed in a court of law. I am proud to join with so many of my colleagues and Alabama's Governor Fob James in supporting Judge Moore's right to display the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are a symbol of our past and a hope for our future. They are the foundational elements of our history, heritage, and laws. Tradition is said to be "nothing but the acknowledgment of the authority of symbols and the relevance of the narratives that gave birth to them." We have many such symbols and traditions in this Nation. We have biblical symbols in the Supreme Court, "In God We Trust" is inscribed here in the Chamber of the House and on every piece of U.S. currency and in addition each day of Congress opens with a prayer. Clearly, our country was founded upon religious principles. Unfortunately, some believe freedom of religion means freedom from religion.

On September 17, 1796, George Washington gave his farewell address saying, "Of all